

Harwood W. Loomis
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United States of America

11 March 2022

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
General Assembly
Committee on Judiciary
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

Re: Governor's Bill No. 16

Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Harwood W. Loomis. I am a resident of Woodbridge. I am writing to OPPOSE the proposed Governor's Bill Number 16, An Act Addressing Gun Violence And Juvenile Crime.

DISCUSSION:

I respectfully request that you OPPOSE the proposed Governor's Bill Number 16 for the following reasons:

1. I respectfully take issue with the very title of the bill. "Gun violence" has become a mantra for politicians and activists who hate the Constitution of the United States of America, and the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. "Gun violence" is violence committed with a gun, but in this country today there is an epidemic of violence and much of that violence is NOT committed with guns. All you need to do is turn on the evening news, or open up YouTube in a web browser and it's easy to find countless examples of people attacking other people with everything from baseball bats to tables and chairs. Curb stomping has become the medium of choice for teen-age punks who don't feel the victim has shown them sufficient respect. Focusing attention on one tool—firearms—only distracts attention from the root problem ... which is that violence is a first response to any perceived slight or insult.
2. Many commercially manufactured firearms sold before 1968 had no serial number. It is completely legal today in the United States and in Connecticut for an individual to fabricate his or her own firearm. I cannot find any valid reason to impose significant restrictions on an activity that is completely legal under federal law. Such restrictions will not in any way deter people who have no intention of observing laws; these restrictions will affect on law-abiding citizens. The proposed requirement for serial numbers on home-made firearms will not have any effect on reducing crime in Connecticut. Why does the Governor want to turn law-abiding citizens into criminals?
3. Section 3 of the bill would significantly limit the freedom to carry a firearm for self defense. Connecticut General Statutes already codify a list of sensitive places where the carrying of firearms is not allowed. I do not believe that there is any history of mass shootings in the types of places proposed to be added to this list that provides any justification for expanding the list. I respectfully submit that Article One, Section 15 of the State constitution says: "Every citizen has a right to bear arms in defense of himself and the state." A right that is barred in places where ordinary people routinely go in the course of their daily lives is hardly a right. Constitutionally-guaranteed rights should be restricted only when there is an overwhelming

need to do so, and then only to the least degree necessary to accomplish the aim of the restriction. What good is a permit to carry a firearm for self-defense if the permit holder cannot travel from his or her home to his or her place of work, recreation, or worship by public transportation without leaving the firearm at home? Section 3 is an unconscionable and unsupportable restriction or a right that is supposed to be guaranteed to us by our own State constitution. The definition of “demonstration” in this section of the bill is particularly chilling, because when we are out in the world, engaged in the ordinary activities of living our lives, we cannot control when a group of activists *as small as fifteen people in a supermarket parking lot* decide to hold a protest. Expecting us to either avoid such “demonstrations” or to disarm when we encounter one is, I respectfully submit, irrational.

4. Section 3 of the bill would also remove the requirement for a police officer to have a reasonable suspicion of a crime before stopping a person seen carrying a firearm and asking if the person has a permit to carry. The Supreme Court of the United States has established that a police officer may stop and question an individual only when the officer has “a reasonable suspicion, based on clearly articulable facts, that a crime has been committed, is being committed, or is about to be committed.” Thus, our existing statute is in agreement with binding legal precedent. The proposed change will be contrary to established legal precedent. I respectfully submit that the legislature should not enact laws that will obviously be subject to legal challenge, and which will almost certainly fail when challenged.
5. Section 10 of the proposed bill would require a local permit to operate a firearms business on top of the state permit already required. Since it is already a federal requirement for an FFL to comply with local zoning requirements, adding this new layer of bureaucracy does not appear to accomplish anything that is not already provided for in law. This appears to be nothing more than an attempt to add additional regulatory hurdles to be overcome in order to operate a business that is completely legal under both federal and State law. At a time when Connecticut is losing population and trying to attract new businesses into the state, I respectfully submit that the legislature should be looking for ways to make doing business in Connecticut easier, not more difficult and more expensive.

In closing, I respectfully urge you to OPPOSE this bill. The bill is 52 pages in length, and nothing contained in the bill will have any positive effect on “Addressing Gun Violence And Juvenile Crime.” Further, the stated purpose of the bill is “To implement the Governor's budget recommendations,” but nothing in the bill addresses the State budget.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harwood W. Loomis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Harwood W. Loomis